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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8002
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1966
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1407
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 4949
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4929
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 8491
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6058
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 1543
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 1738
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 0394
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 3950
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1912
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000619

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [KCRD](#) [ASEC](#) [PREF](#) [ELAB](#) [SMIG](#) [BM](#)
SUBJECT: BURMA: CRACKING DOWN ON TRAFFICKING FROM THE DELTA

REF: A. RANGOON 575
 [1](#)B. BANGKOK 1588

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[11.](#) (C) Summary. Aware that the conditions in the Irrawaddy Delta have deteriorated since Cyclone Nargis hit, making more people vulnerable to trafficking, the Police Anti-Trafficking Unit (ATU) has stepped up its monitoring of human trafficking and smuggling into neighboring countries. In June, the ATU intercepted approximately 150 women, children, and men; more than 80 were from the delta. According to the ATU, some of these individuals voluntarily chose to seek economic opportunities abroad while others were enticed by specific job offers. ATU officers, who arrested five suspected traffickers in June, continue to investigate these cases. All victims have been repatriated to their homes. The ATU, coordinating with Save the Children, World Vision, and the International Organization for Migration, continue to assist the survivors and victims' families from the April 2008 trafficking case in Ranong Province, Thailand. According to Save the Children and World Vision, the NGOs will work with Liberty Insurance Company to ensure that compensation for the 54 deceased workers is provided to their families. End Summary.

Cyclone Survivors Vulnerable

[12.](#) (C) Economic conditions in Burma continue to deteriorate, leaving men, women, and children vulnerable to human trafficking. According to Police Colonel Sit Aye, Cyclone Nargis survivors from the Irrawaddy Delta are the most vulnerable, as most of them lost their homes, families, and livelihoods (Ref A). The Anti-Trafficking Unit (ATU) has seen an increase in trafficking and people smuggling into

China and Thailand since May, with most of the people coming from cyclone-affected areas, he noted. To combat trafficking, Anti-Trafficking police in the border areas increased their inspections of vehicles moving across the border, particularly in the border crossings of Muse, Kauthaung, and Myawaddy.

¶13. (C) In June, the Anti-trafficking units intercepted more than 150 Burmese trying to cross into Thailand and China, Lt. Colonel Rahlyan Mone told Save the Children's TIP office. Between June 11-15, the ATU investigated seven trafficking cases involving 89 cyclone survivors. Of the 89 people, 48 were women, 31 were men, and 10 were children. According to Save the Children Deputy Director Guy Caves, the majority of these victims voluntarily chose to leave Burma, with the expectation that their brokers would find jobs for them abroad. Several of the brokers posed as aid workers, promising women and children undefined jobs paying 200,00-300,000 kyat (\$167-250) per month. In most instances, the victims did not pay a fee to a broker, Caves told us. The ATU classified these cases as trafficking because they either involved children (smuggling of children in Burma is considered trafficking) or the police believed the brokers would exploit the victims once they crossed the border.

¶14. (C) The ATU arrested five alleged brokers in June; investigations remain ongoing. Col. Sit Aye emphasized that the brokers will be put on trial as soon as the police have enough evidence to convict them of trafficking. Caves told us that the police, working with the Myanmar Women's Federation and the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), repatriated the victims to their homes or families. Not all of the victims from the Irrawaddy Delta wanted to return, so

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DSW officials helped locate families in Rangoon where they could stay, he noted. DSW officials provided trafficking awareness training to the victims before sending them home and gave them referrals for social services.

Compensating Ranong Victims' Families

¶15. (C) Save the Children, World Vision, and the International Office of Migration (IOM) continue to work closely with the Burmese police to assist the survivors of the April 2008 trafficking case in Thailand's Ranong Province (Ref B). According to Save the Children TIP official Win Ma Ma Aye, Save the Children helped reunify 22 of the 66 survivors with their families in Burma, with IOM and World Vision assisting the remaining 44 individuals. Win Ma Ma Aye lauded the ATU's work in this case, noting that the police not only repatriated the survivors and coordinated with the Thai police to arrest some of the brokers, but the ATU also worked on behalf of the families of the 54 deceased workers to get compensation from Liberty Insurance Company. The families should receive their money in two phases, for a total of 100,000 baht (approximately \$3200) per worker, she noted. Save the Children, IOM, and World Vision will assist with the disbursements of the funds to ensure that each family receives its share.

Comment

¶16. (C) The Anti-Trafficking Unit is one of the few Burmese Government organizations that does its job well, and thus deserves some recognition for its efforts. Colonel Sit Aye and his staff continue to demonstrate genuine commitment to address trafficking and human smuggling, and have significantly improved their coordination with UN agencies and NGOs on these issues. During the next few years, these ATU officers will retire; NGOs have voiced their concern about whether the new police leadership will have the skills necessary to continue the ATU's work. NGOs and UN agencies will continue to educate and train the next generation of ATU

officers if we offer encouragement.

VILLAROSA